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EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

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(54) Apparatus for holding a substrate during polishing

(57) A wafer polishing head (100) utilises a wafer backing member (124) having a wafer facing pocket (126) which is sealed against the wafer and is pressurised with air or other fluid to provide a uniform force distribution pattern across the width of the wafer inside an edge seal feature (123) at the perimeter of the wafer to urge (or press) the wafer uniformly toward a polishing pad (182). Wafer polishing is carried out uniformly without variations in the amount of wafer material across the usable area of the wafer. A frictional force between the seal feature (123) of the backing member and the surface of the wafer transfers rotational movement of the head to the wafer during polishing. A pressure controlled bellows (118) supports and presses the wafer backing member (124) toward the polishing pad (182) and accommodates any dimensional variation between the polishing head and the polishing pad as the polishing head is moved relative to the polishing pad. An integral, but independently retractable and extendable retaining ring assembly (146) is provided around the wafer backing member and wafer to uniformly and independently control the pressure of a wafer perimeter retaining ring (162) on the polishing pad (182) of a wafer polishing bed (180).

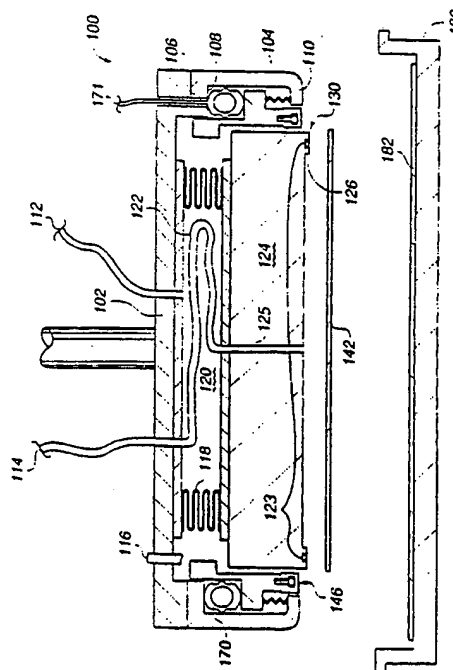


Fig. 3

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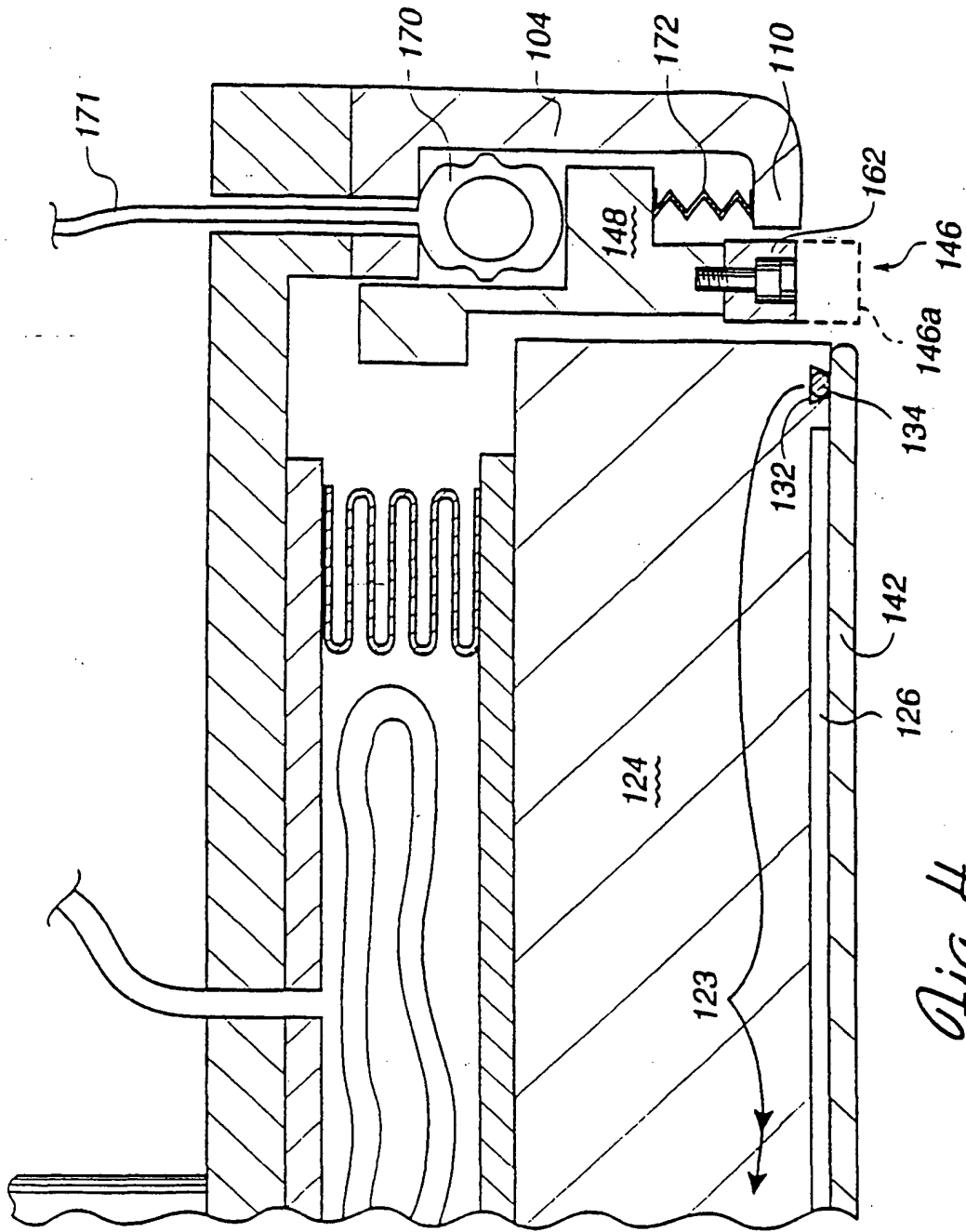


Fig. 4



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 96 30 4118

96006260-0102002

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
A	PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 010, no. 176 (M-491), 20 June 1986 & JP-A-61 025768 (NEC CORP), 4 February 1986, * abstract *	1,11,18, 22,39	
A	--- PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 013, no. 133 (M-809), 4 April 1989 & JP-A-63 300858 (HITACHI LTD), 8 December 1988, * abstract *	1,11,18, 22,39	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6)
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 27 November 1996	Examiner Garella, M
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS		I : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons ----- & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document			

EPO FORM 1503 (1.12.1994) (P4/C01)



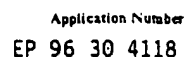
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EP 96 30 4118 - B -

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirement of unity of invention and relates to several inventions, namely:

1. Claims 1-4, 8-14, 18-46 : A substrate polishing apparatus having a backing member with a sealed pocket and a method of polishing a substrate.
2. Claims 5-7, 17 : A substrate polishing apparatus having a retaining ring assembly.
3. Claims 15, 16 : A substrate polishing apparatus having a bellows member.





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CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing more than ten claims.

- ☐ All claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.
- ☐ Only part of the claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claims:
- ☐ No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims.

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirement of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

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- ☒ All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.
- ☐ Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:
- ☐ None of the further search fees has been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims: